Depot Town Rag

June 1987
for the good of the block:

Artists & Artisans
in the Old Caboose

The Association and the Foundation
Thursday, 6/18
in the Old Caboose

Antique Engine Club
Thursday 6/25
Domino's Barn

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. **The Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198**

Foot Bridge, Paved Parking and Pathways Coming This Summer

City Hall officials met Depot Towners in the Old Caboose last month to show plans for three projects for the district which will begin in June with hopes and promises for completion before the August 21, 22, 23, Heritage Festival. According to Sue Dickinson, the City's Senior Economic Planner, nearly $700,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds are virtually assured for the development of parking lots, pathways and a foot bridge in the Depot Town/Frog Island/Riverside Park environs.

Landscape architect, Peter Pollack, reviewed a long-range concept for development of the Huron riverfront park system which will someday connect Depot Town with Ford Lake via paths, parks and footbridges along Ypsilanti's long-neglected waterway.

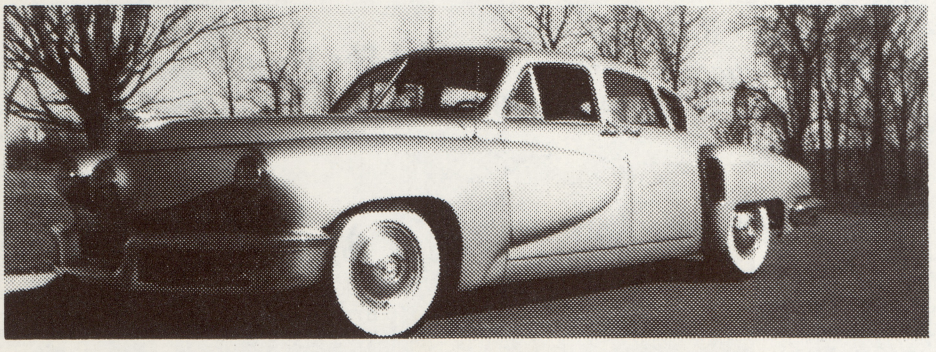
This conceptual piece was followed by the City's plan to improve the Frog Island parking lot from Cross Street to the newly installed Recycling Center. Straightening out the dog-leg just north of the Old Caboose, lighting, paving and landscaping will provide a top-scale parking space for up to 107 cars. Also included in the plan is a new landscape and traffic design for two-lane entry and exit at Rice Street between Paponetti's Pasta and the Grand Trunk.

Paving of pathways around the perimeter of Riverside Park should also be completed before Festival time in order to keep down dust and erosion problems experienced in the last several years' trek of thousands of people to Our Town's giant annual attraction.

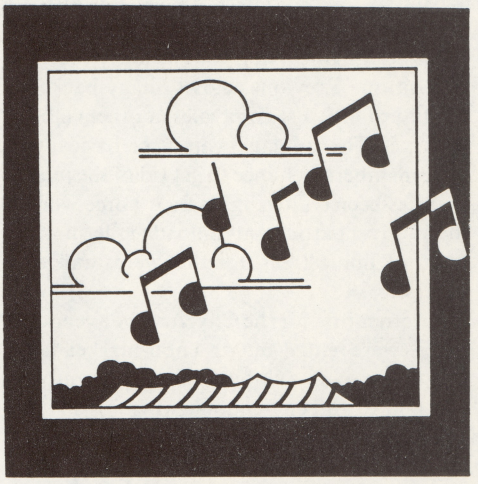
Pollack's final presentation was a model of the proposed three-way foot bridge (on display in Pronto Pizza's window) which will connect Depot Town, Frog Island and Riverside Park. Made of laminated wood beams up to 90 feet long sitting on concrete piling harmonous with the current bridge supports, the spans will meet just upstream from the tiny island south of the Cross Street Bridge. From that point, the footbridge will pass under the vehicular bridge from which lighting will be installed.

A possible bridge closing will result from the installation and contracts specify that work must either be completed in time for Festival or suspended during the event. Either way, Depot Town visitors will again be treated to a dynamic street show for the better part of the summer.

Tucker Auto Returns to Depot Town



When Tom Monaghan brought his 1946 Tucker to his brother, Jim's May 25 Antique Engine Club Swap Meet, it was most appropriate for those NIFTY folks to park it near the Historic Follett House. Sensitive observers noted the irony of the ancient billboards still calling out from the west-facing wall of the old building. "Mayflower Storage" still shines from the bricks and mortar, proclaiming another tradition of the Tucker family in Ypsilanti - their moving company which was headquartered in Depot Town.



1987 Frog Island Tent

Blues & Jazz Festival

Saturday, June 27
Noon to midnight
Rain or shine

Mr. B

Motor City Jazz Quintet
with Ken Kellet, Dan Spencer, Gary Schunk, Scott Peterson and Walt Szymanski

Ursula Walker
Buddy Budson Quartet

George Adams
Don Pullen Quartet
with Danny Richmond and Cameron Brown

Trinidad/Tripoli Steel Band

Albert King

Life Styles of the Poor - but Happy (in the manner of Robin Leech)

Engine Club Swap Meet Fills Memorial Day Event

It was a fantastic festival of 'firsts' for these friendly and fanatic aficianadoes of the Industrial Revolution . . . and it all happened as an amazing adjunct to the terrific tradition of memorable Memorial Day celebrations in good old Ypsilanti, Michigan's historic Depot Town.

The **first first:** it was the Depot Town Antique Engine Club's first independent exposition. Previous shows piggy-backed Hertiage Festivals, pizza sales or other clubs' activities. The tail-gate swap-meet, basically, gave members a chance to get rid of the junk that has been cluttering up their home work shops. Most participants unloaded the 'junk', but took home 'treasures' that were 'junk' to others.

Another **first** for the City: outdoor vendor spaces were rented-out on a non-market day - to fifteen club exhibitors (engines, autos, etc) and to fifteen vendors (whistles, signs, guages, engines, and other formats of iron mongery).

-**First** big sales: Ron Bracken's vertical two-tone blue Wisconsin Whatsit gas engine-may have been the biggest item sold, but Club President, Jim Monaghan, carried home the biggest item -- a two-foot diameter pressure guage with milk glass two-way back-lighted face.

-**First** contract for a mechanical band (sort of like a caliope, but more so) for Heritage Festival. Watch for music untouched by human hands in the Heritage Parade - sponsored by the DTAEC.

-**First** complete use of the Market Plaza for a non-Michigan produce event.

And, for many citizens leaving the Cross Street Bridge after the veterans' procession and dedication, it was the **first** time they've seen such antique contraptions chugging and putting and hicoughing around this old district.

Perhaps another memorable **first** is the first return of the Tucker automobile to Depot Town.

CROSS STREET ANTIQUES
33 East Cross

Vintage Passion
Unusual & Different Costume Jewelry
32 East Cross

Garden Memorialized

In what looked like a polyester garden planted by a demented landscape architect to commemorate a history of bad taste - or low taste - or no taste, the planter in front of Apple Annie's & Jim MacDonald's Antiques spewed forth plastic and day-glow designs hideous enough to stop traffic and cause temporary blindness among pedestrians. All this ugliness, was, said local shop owners, in response to the May ***Rag's*** plea for spring planting which encouraged new folks to participate in the district's annual floral beautification.

This new addition may not need water or fertilizer, but neither will it regenerate after the 'prettier' blooms are picked. Only time will tell how long the installation will make it into the summer. Even more neighbors stand ready to help with the second planting. Certainly ***The Rag's*** editor will be among them.

RIVER ARTWORKS
CUSTOM FRAMING
DESIGNER MATS
482-8785
48 E. CROSS
DEPOT TOWN

Ragtime quotes:

Small Town America
Is Alive And Well

Thompson Building Mall
Over 4000 square feet of dealers
412 North River • 484-4288

Depot Exchange Antiques
Professional Furniture Stripping
54 East Cross

Jim MacDonald's Antiques
Apple Annie's
Vintage Clothing
29 East Cross • 481-0555

Michigan 150 Whistle Stop Tour

Just Wave As You Go By --

The Michigan Travel Bureau, Michigan Department of Transportation, Amtrak and the Sesquicentennial Commission joined forces to kick off the 1987 Michigan Week. The Michigan Whistle Stop Tour, with Chicago area travel writers aboard, stopped at six Michigan towns: Niles, Kalamazoo, Battle Creek, Jackson, Ann Arbor and --- Dearborn. The Governor's Sesquicentennial team coordinated activities at each stop, and the Metropolitan Detroit Convention and Visitors Bureau planned a mini-familiarzations tour of the Detroit area.

As they sped through Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town, one of the Chicago travel writers was heard to say, "Hey, look at that! Why, this district looks just like our 'Old Town' did before the tourists and developers came and wrecked it. Why don't we stop here?" Too late, though, and the Governor's Committee whisked them off to Dearborn and Detroit for a closer look at the Twentieth Century. Limited.

Hon's
Flowers & Fancies
46 East Cross 482-2124

The Grand Trunk, Ltd.
Cards & Gifts
15 East Cross 485-4994

Big Bob's Magazines
Magazines, Comics, Posters
50 East Cross 485-4930

Depot Doo
Fine Design in Hair Style
25 East Cross ‡ 484-3045

The 1987 Frog Island Tent Blues & Jazz Festival

There's nothing quite like the Frog Island Festival. It is akin to a giant neighborhood picnic, with the best music in the world. Kids, frisbees, picnic baskets, blankets and lawn chairs are welcome at this family event. The music in this, our seventh year, offers something for everyone: classic blues, vocal jazz, Caribbean music and the most modern, compelling elements of the tradition.

Radio station WEMU, in partnership with the Depot Town Association, Inc., sponsors the annual Winter Jazz Series and the August Heritage Jazz Competition as well as the all-day Frog Island event. Frog Island, as it has come to be known is only a single day's event, but this geographic designation has become a hallmark in the annals of jazz music in its seven-year history. Few neighborhoods in the world have exploited a back yard so creatively. Located in Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town, Frog Island boasts a river bank, a big, grassy field, shady trees and a spacious, airy, cool tent that assures comfort no matter what the weather. The city's green riverside park has evolved a long way from the days when a sluice ran the lumber and flour mills built here in the 1800's. Gone, too, are the days when the 'island' was the high school athletic field. Long seen as a great running track and soccer field, Frog Island has attained a whole new identity as a showcase for jazz musicians of national importance in its 1980s incarnation.

There's a cash bar and food booths, plus the good vibrations that only an audience of quality music lovers can generate. Ask someone who's been to Frog Island; they will say there is no finer way to spend a day.

Here's the exciting musical line-up for Saturday, June 27:

12 noon - Mr. B: The popular young boogie pianist always promises a rockin' good time. A good reason to get there early.

1 p.m. - The Motor City Jazz Quintet: Top drawer Motor City bebop from the finest small group at the 1986 Montreaux / Detroit Festival, featuring Detroit veterans Ken Kellett, Gary Schunk and Danny Spencer, plus J.C. Heard's top soloists, Walt Szymanski and Scott Peterson. Bird lives!

3 p.m. - The Ursula Walker / Buddy Budson Quartet: Ursula Walker has for two decades been Detroit's most accomplished and respected jazz vocalist.

5 p.m. - The George Adams / Don Pullen Quartet: Winner of many major jazz polls, with as string of five-star album reviews, this band plays modern jazz with gutbucket authenticity and stunning creativity. Adams, Pullen and drummer Danny Richmond were the heat and heart of the Mingus bands of the '70s. It simply does not get any better than this -- a Detroit area premiere not to be missed.

8 p.m. - The Tinidad / Tripoli Steel Band: Sparked by the vocals of the The Buzzin' Bee and Reggae Man, this band's blend of raggae, calypso and pure Caribbean sunshine is quaranteed to get any crowd up and dancing.

10 p.m. - Albert King: Singing guitar, punchy and soulful horns, an unstoppable beat and a matchless voice -- this American classic is today's true King of the Blues. A terrific climax to a day of great music.

Tickets are $9 in advance and $12 at the gate; children under 12 admitted free. For mail orders, send a check or money order made out to "Depot Town Jazz," along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Frog Island Tickets, WEMU, 426 King Hall, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Please, no mail orders after June 17. Cans, bottles, brought-in alcohol and pets are strictly forbidden.

Ypsilanti Recycling Project
20 East Cross • 487-9727

Hansen's
Standard Printing
35 East Cross • 483-0339

Depot Doo
Fine Design in Hair Style
25 East Cross ‡ 484-3045

Ike's Depot Town Barbershop
40 East Cross • 483-6300

City Radiator
110 North River 483-2248

Ted's Auto Electric
307 North River 483-1238

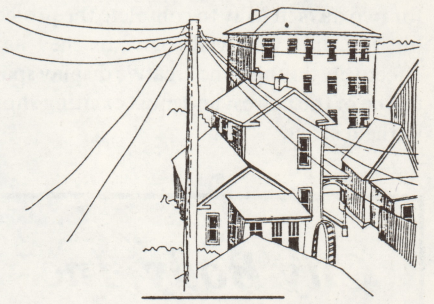
B & D Retail
Plumbing & Heating
310 North River 487-1510

The Central Business District (CBC) Announces:

Ypsilanti Summertime Fair Friday & Saturday June 19 & 20

The Washington Street Mall will be lined with antique cars, bikes, motorcycles, arts and crafts. Demonstrations of painting, stained glass, country dolls, button making, silk flowers, pillows, needlework and more will be taking place, Fingerprint your kids or check your blood pressure at other community service booths.

Win a VCR from CBS or a Bulova watch from Campbell's Jewelers. Have lunch at one of the many restaurants -- and do some shoppin at Ypsilanti's fine downtown stores.



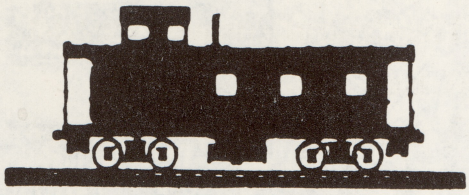
Old Town Restaurant
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
38 East Cross

Paponetti's Pasta
Homemade Italian Food & Pastries
17 East Cross 483-3574

Aubree's Saloon & Second Floor
39 East Cross

Pronto Pizza
Pizza & Subs
37 East Cross 483-4555

Sidetrack
Good Food, Good Drinks, Good Times
56 East Cross 483-1053



D.T.A. 21 May 1987

Minutes of April meeting were o.k.

Treasury: $4865.63 Total

4217.22	General
(1362.30)	Rag
1000.00	Jazz
30.00	Caboose Repair
32.78	Halloween
553.93	Boomer Days
394.00	Merchants

Rain Insurance for Frog Island Concert will cost $660 premium against five hours (out of twelve hours) with 1/100th of an inch to cover the $22,000 investment.

Boomer Days: July 10, 11, 12

- Quarterly Meeting and Coronation Friday night
- Bums' Rush - a fun run
- "Maxton Bay" hired for Saturday's dance
- Mulligan Stew-Off needs a chairperson
- Kidsart will paint barrels for Heritage Fest
- Hobo Jungle architecture contest
- Jan Gower is soliciting prize donations
- DTA adds $250 to already-pledged $500
- Ugly Americans (Ann Arbor Chapter) have accepted invitation for Sunday morning
- Volunteers should call Bonni Rosen at 482-FINE

Jazz: Frog Island Concert is June 27. Flyers, posters and tickets are in place. Need help for set-up. Aubree's bar staff will assist. Security: Dodd, Meadows, Clean-up: Boersma, Tickets: Ward, Rosen-Fine.

Heritage Festival: August 21, 22, 23. Michigan Artrian is expected to return. Artists & Artisans are prepared to exhibit and demonstrate.

Artists & Artisans: Helen Bunch will represent group as DTA Vice President, but is in China at present. Martha Kemnitz and Anneka Mobry present the DTA & A By Laws (elsewhere in this issue). They will meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month.

NIFTY (new Initiative For Tourism in Ypsilanti): Memorial Day event includes Antique Engine Club Tail Gate / Swap Meet, Caboose Open House, exhibit of Domino's Tucker automobile, Artrain promotion.

CBC Summer Festival June 19-20: DTA will staff a booth on the Washington Street Mall featuring the Frog Island Jazz event.

First Lady Sesquicentennial Award: Carolyn McKeever has been nominated and paper begun to meet the June 11 deadline.

Aubree's Saloon: Thursday night open mike night has been reinstated.

Depot Town Antique Engine Club: May newsletter distributed. Swap Meet, Fourth of July event, Early Engine expo and labor Day Show being planned.

Best Yet Award - to Lynn Talbot for her hilarious plastic flower display and to the many helpful volunteers for this year's Boomer Days.

The Golden Goose to the few who don't ever volunteer, but continue to reap the benefits of the promotions of their neighbors.

Artists & Artisans Adopt Standards

By-Laws of the Depot Town Artists and Artisans

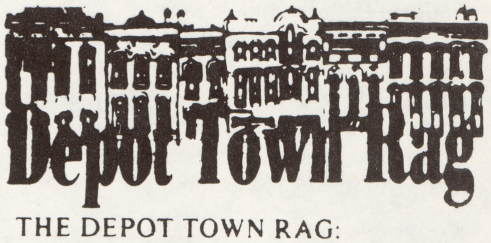
1. **Statement of Purpose:** To provide artists/artisans in the Ypsilanti area a place to meet, share information and plan activities. To provide the Ypsilanti community with a recognizable body of artists/artisans to consult, purchase art from, share activities with.
2. **Membership:** Those eligible for membership are any and all artists/artisans living in or concerned with Ypsilanti. Dues shall be in the amount of $12.00 per year. We shall recognize as a voting member any artist/artisan who pays dues.
3. **Meetings:** Meetings shall take place on the second and fourth Wednesdays of every month. Additional meetings and activities may be scheduled according to a vote of the membership.
4. **Officers:** Officers shall be elected by a vote of the membership. Those officers shall be President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. The President shall serve as liason to the parent group, the Depot Town Association.
5. **Decisions:** Decisions shall be made by a clear majority of the voting members present, provided that those members constitute a quorum which shall be one half of the voting membership.
6. **Dissolution:** Depot Town artists & Artisans may be dissolved at any time by a vote of 2/3 of the members present at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Depot Town Antique Engine Club to exhibit Antique Gas & Steam Engines

Greenfield Village - July 3, 4, 5
Boomer Days - July 10, 11, 12
Heritage Festival - August 21, 22, 23
Domino's Farms - Labor Day Weekend
Ypsilanti Farmer's Market Fall Fair - October 3

-Interested antique engineers are encouraged to join them at their meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month. Information is available: DTAEC, The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti MI 48198.

Support the Businesses that bring you The Depot Town Rag



THE DEPOT TOWN RAG:

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc., a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

The Depot Town Association, Inc.,
Gary McKeever, President
The Caboose, 400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Get Your
Heritage Festival
Printing At
Standard Printing Company
35 East Cross St. • Ypsilanti, MI

The Vitamin Shoppe
Vitamins, Herbs,
Nutritional Suppliments
9 East Cross • 485-2711

Aubree's Capsulizes Local History on New Menu

When this summer's sidewalk cafe reappeared at Aubree's Saloon, so did a new menu. Jim Markley's hand-drawn design includes many features of the old building which has seen continuous use as a railroad district tavern since the days when Ypsilanti's Depot Town was as far west as you could go on the railroad.

Aubree's menu's back page states:

"Welcome Friends. It all started in the 1870's when a group of men returning from the Civil War constructed me from timber, brick and mortar. The adage 'they don't build them like they used to' stands particularly true in my case. Buildings today, taking the rumbling and shaking for a century that I have, would be a pile of rubble.

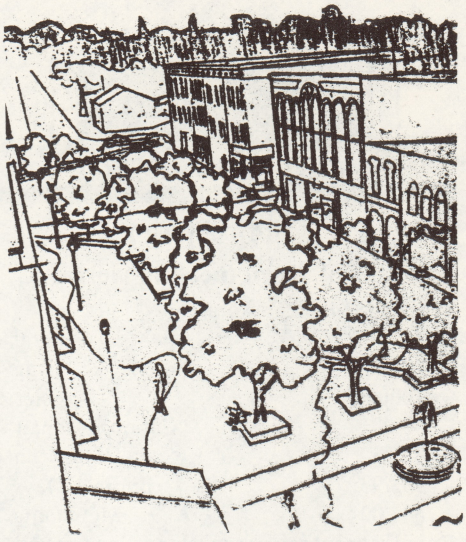
"My first assignment was to house the **Carr Hotel** for the stagecoach travelers along the Detroit-Chicago route. Then came railroads, and I welcomed settlers to the midwest. My hospitality extended further to those travelers of the underground railroad when shelter and aid were provided in my basement to runaway slaves.

"There were a series of names early in my youth: the **Neat House, Dad's Tavern,** and the **Oliver House.** Oliver Westfall really made me prosper, with rooms for travelers, an upstairs dining room and a first-floor saloon.

"We went through World War I and some bad times, but mostly good. The happiest year was 1933, when Prohibition ended. My saloon was no longer an **ice cream parlor.** I remained the Oliver House until World War II when I became known as **Ken's.** After the war, our boys came home and enrolled in universities. I became a favorite watering hole for EMU students majoring in the art of imbibing. The 60s and 70s brought the **Alibi** and the '80s brought **Aubrees,** now a jewel of Ypsi's 19th Century Historic District. The boys in D.C. are talking about making me a National Historic Building.

"Throughout the changes in history, I still uphold the American saloon tradition of warmth, hospitality, good food, and great drink. When the light's just right, my south facade still proclaims 'The Oliver House.' As in the beginning of my life, you are welcome here, any time."

- Such local boosterism through historical chronology seems an effective promotional tool in a district as ancient as ours. All buildings and businesses in Depot Town are encouraged to follow Aubree's good example.



Trees in the Middle of Cross Street?

Few things are more disconcerting to a building owner than seeing an architect's conceptual drawing of their area with a park or a fountain placed right where their building stands. That's why they call them 'concepts.' They are just ideas. And Dubisky Land Planning's recent concept shows us plenty of new ideas for Depot Town: vehicular access to the Huron River, fountains in the square, a broad promenade from the railroad track and dozens of trees in what is now East Cross Street.

Dubisky's elegant brochure (concept) states, "Depot Town was once the hub of activity for Ypsilanti and surrounding areas. The growth of Ypsilanti after WWII pulled the life giving commerce to the modern malls an shopping districts. But Depot Town, once left forgotten and deteriorating, is now on the rebound. At the present it is in a state of rebirth, and now is the perfect time to replan so that the same thing doesn't happen again."

His current 'conceptual plan' is designed "to recapture the character and essence of the old Depot Town. A time when people walked the streets while shopping without the annoyances and noises of constant automobile traffic. All of this is made possible by creating a pedestrian mall between Rice and Ninde Streets where Cross Street now exists. The existing roadway will be rerouted to the south." He explains that "the main thrust of the (concept) is to create a more pleasant atmosphere so that more people are attracted to shop and sight-see."

Viewers of the concept currently on display in the old Caboose may argue that, before automobiles, we had horses, wagons and carriages clogging the street, but they are encouraged to look beyond the fountain or tree in the place where they now work or live to see an exciting new concept for this old block. It's a concept.

Miller's
SINCE 1896
ICE CREAM
42 E. Cross
•
Historic Depot Town
OPEN ALL YEAR!

The Cricket Box
19 East Cross Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198
(313) 487-5595

Old Town Coin and Gold has finally moved into its new home and the green-on-green exterior color scheme is a delight to behold. Picked up from their elegantly lettered sign, the greens are a cool and sophisticated addition to all the so-called 'earth tones' seen on the block in recent years.

PEDDLER'S PATH
44 East Cross

More Adequate Display Area has been installed in the center of the display floor of Peddler's Path in order to show off all that merchandise from floor - to above-eye-level. Pat and Lisa had to close the shop for two days in May to complete the project, but the time was well spent, as they have effectively doubled the creative display space in one of the newest and most exciting shops in the district.

City Body, Inc.
20 East Cross

Front Alignments
Special - **$24.95**

New Interior Belies Historic Facade

The Sobbry brothers welcome all who will wander through their expansive doorways into their newly opened City Body, Inc. White spray-painted walls give the interior the pristine elegance of a top-of-the-line restaurant food preparation area. And the state-of-the-art paint-drying booth looks like it came right out of the research and design center of Detroit's highest-tech auto makers. The new six-inch-thick concrete floors will, no doubt, cause these buildings to stand forever -- in addition to securing the stretch racks for straightening modern auto bodies.

It's so easy to visit this ultra-modern facility in Depot Town: on summer days the doors are open and the craftsmen are friendly and helpful. Just as in 'the good old days,' interested friends and neighbors are always welcome.

RAGTIME

The Flavor of the 19th Century

Down in Depot Town

CROSS STREET ANTIQUES
33 East Cross

Antique Dealers Converge

Jan and Nels Gower, of Cross Street Antiques, have opened a new back show room and a basement show room which include consignments, only. Current dealers at the shop, in addition to the Gowers, include Ray and Jean Coy, Marge Pollicchio, Rodney Wing, Rick Talbot and Lynn Radtke. The Gowers have done a skillful job of fitting a wide variety of quality antiques into their new shop in Depot Town and encourage shoppers to browse through both levels of their handsome shop.

Ypsilanti's Farmers' Market
in historic Depot Town

JUNE

NEW! SUMMER MARKET LOCATIONS IN HISTORIC RAILROAD FREIGHT-HOUSE

-New Indoor Stall locations
-FRESHER PRODUCE out of sun!
-COOLER SHOPPING In summer heat!
-RAIN SHELTERED for vendor & You

6/6 — "Strawberry Crafts Showtime" crafts & gifts, 8-3

6/13 — "Fresh Strawberry Delights demo, recipes, & samples 9-12

Our Little Secret
Resale Clothing & Other Niceties
23 East Cross

Our Little Secret was one of the best-kept secrets on the block these last two months, but not because of their excellent line of high quality used clothing. We at the Rag didn't mean it, but we inadvertently omitted their monthly display in our pages during April and May. Stop in and see what's new (and old) and tell them how much you have appreciated their sponsorship of this little monthly paper. Pass our apologies on to Rebecca and Paul Dornfeld as you continue your thrifty shopping in their value-laden, cozy, but not-so-secret, shop.

YPSI FOOD COOP

WHOLE NATURAL FOOD IN BULK OR SMALL QUANTITIES

M.,T.,Th.,F. 10-7 Wed. 10-9 312 N.River
483-1520 Sat. 9-7 Sun. 12-5

Ypsilanti Food Co-op To Distribute New Door-To-Door Flyer

The Ypsilanti Food Co-op will distribute door-to-door flyers to the local community in June. The flyers will contain general information about the co-op, such as location, hours of operation, and product line.

The flyers are part of a co-op effort to increase its customer base and to increase its overall visibility in the Ypsilanti community.

Flyers will also be available at the co-op, which is located at 312 N. River St., Depot Town, in Ypsilanti.

SEE YOU LATER

at July 10, 11, 12
BOOMER DAYS!